

ETHNOLOGICAL NOTES.

By D. A. Casey,

Hon. Ethnologist, National Museum.

(Plates VII and VIII.)

STONE IMPLEMENTS FROM INNISFAIL AND CAIRNS, QUEENSLAND.

The National Museum has recently received two examples of a hitherto undescribed type of stone implement from Mr. G. Kemlin, of Mena Creek, Innisfail, Queensland (Fig. 1 and

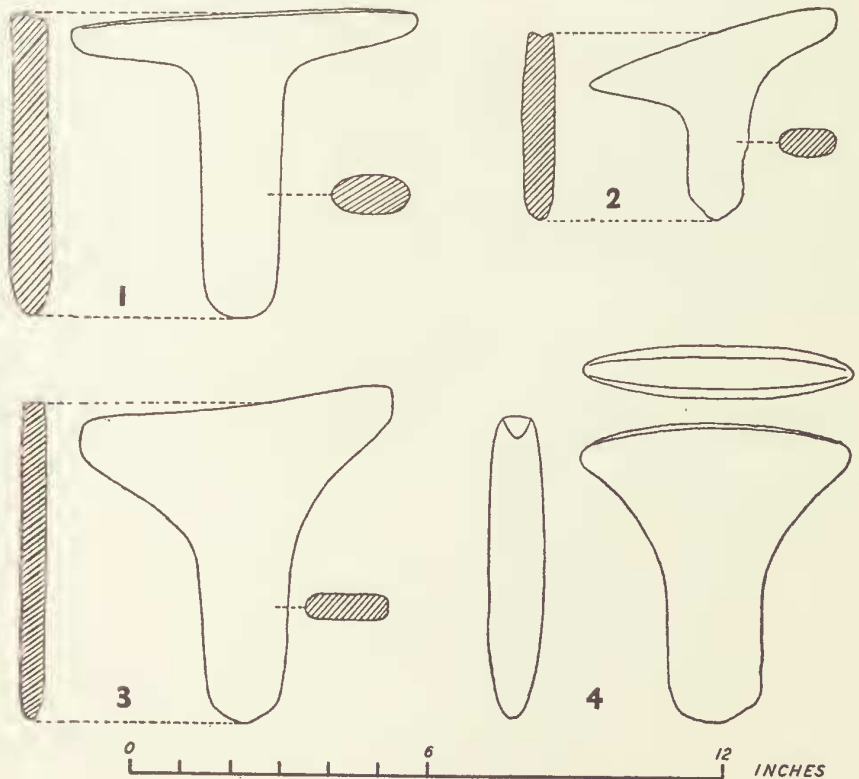


FIG. 1. IMPLEMENTS FROM INNISFAIL AND CAIRNS. $\times \frac{1}{4}$.

Pl. VII, Nos. 2 and 3). Mr. Kemlin states that they were turned up by the plough on land which had just been cleared of heavy timber. There is another example in the Australian Museum, Sydney, from near Cairns (Fig. 1 and Pl. VII,

No. 1); and one in the Queensland Museum, Brisbane, from the Johnstone River, Innisfail (Fig. 1, No. 4). Only these four are available for description, although others are said to have been found in the same area.

In each case the end surface of the implement is flat or only slightly curved, and shows longitudinal striations as if it had been rubbed or used for rubbing. In No. 2 this has resulted in an actual groove. Their use is unknown, except that the example in the Queensland Museum, No. 4, is labelled: "Whetstone. Native name: *Ooyurka*. Used by the Settlement Creek blacks to sharpen tomahawks, etc., and to strip netted fibre of vervain"; it was presented to the Museum by Mr. H. Tryon in 1897, and is said to have been ploughed up by a settler. The shape of the implement, however, would not seem to be particularly well suited for either of these functions. It may be noted also that vervain (*Vibena*) does not have a netted bark, although the natives of this area did use barks with a netted fibre (e.g., *Stercula*) for making twine. (W. E. Roth, North Queensland Ethnography Bulletin, No. 1, p. 10, 1901.)

The implements are shaped apparently by hammer dressing and grinding. The example from Cairns, No. 1, is finely finished all over. It has a smooth surface and is symmetrically rounded. The standard of workmanship is remarkably high for an Australian implement and is more like that of the stone club heads of Papua. Numbers 2 and 3 are not so well finished, but are clearly of the same technique. Number 4 has not been seen by the writer, but according to Mr. H. A. Longman it has been made and finished in the same way.

Number 1 is made from a dense metamorphic rock, and is heavily patinated; No. 2 from a fine-grained schist, slightly patinated; No. 3 from schist, heavily patinated; and No. 4 from a rock which is probably basalt.

FLINT IMPLEMENT FROM CAMPERDOWN, VICTORIA.

The implement illustrated in Fig. 2 was found some years ago when a drain was being dug on the polo ground at Tallindert, near Camperdown, and was presented to the National Museum by Mr. S. F. Mann. It is the only example of an implement of this sort so far known from Victoria.

The material is a brown or honey coloured fossiliferous flint, the surface of which is patinated and has changed to a grey colour. It is made from a long flake, or blade, originally triangular in section, trimmed all round with secondary flaking, except at the butt.

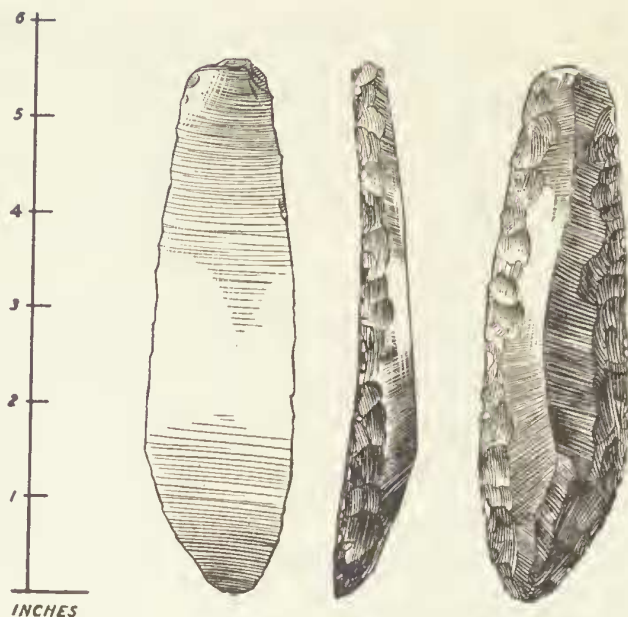


FIG. 2. IMPLEMENT FROM CAMPERDOWN. $\times \frac{1}{2}$.

Although no other example of a blade implement as large as this has been found in Victoria, it cannot be regarded as a mere chance production, as it exhibits a specialized technique which calls for considerable practice and skill. The flake has been deliberately made long and triangular in section by striking it from a prepared core from which preliminary flakes had been removed. The central ridge of the implement is the junction of the scars of two preliminary flakes. This technique is well known elsewhere (e.g., the quartzite flake knives and spearheads of Central and Northern Australia), but it is known in Victoria only in microlithic implements and, very rarely, in flake implements up to about 3 inches in length.

The size of the Camperdown implement and the skill shown in the primary flaking are so striking that they would seem to indicate the existence of a variety of stone industry in Western Victoria of which it is the only known product.

LARGE TANGED STONE IMPLEMENT FROM NEW SOUTH WALES.

Since the last volume of these Memoirs was issued another example of the "bicycle saddle" implements described therein has been sent to the Museum for examination by Mr. J. Whiteley, of Oberon, New South Wales. It was found by Mr. Cyril Evans, at The Meadows (6 miles NE. of Oberon) while ploughing newly cleared land.

The implement (Fig. 3) is $10\frac{1}{4}$ inches long, slightly under an inch thick, and weighs 3 lb. 1 oz. It is made from a natural slab of a slightly vesicular grey volcanic rock, probably trachyte. The slab has been chipped to shape, leaving the natural weathered surface on both faces. The chipped surfaces have become slightly patinated to a darker grey. There are no signs of hammer dressing or grinding.

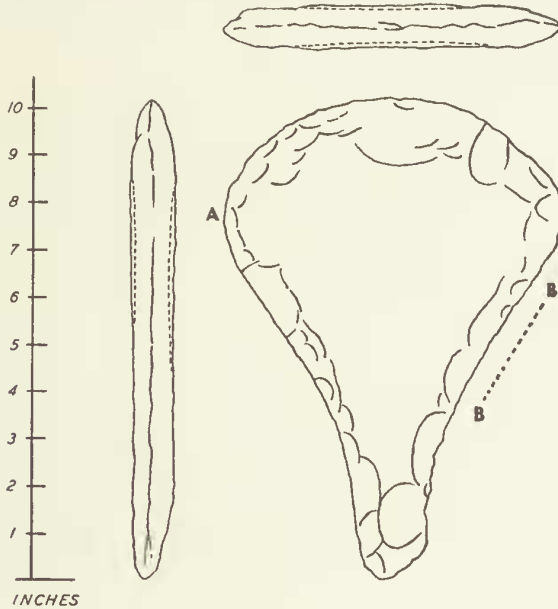


FIG. 3. IMPLEMENT FROM OBERON. $\times \frac{1}{4}$.

The chipping has been done from both sides, so that the edge is in the medial plane. The edge is well defined all round, except at the butt and at one corner (Fig. 3, A), where it is rather rounded and blunt. For such comparatively intractable material the implement is remarkably symmetrical.

Both faces are slightly hollow ($\frac{1}{16}$ in. on one side and $\frac{1}{8}$ in. on the other). The surfaces of the hollows appear to have been smoothed by rubbing, as if the implement had been used as a lower millstone. The rubbing, which is slight but quite definite, extends also over the chipped surface at one side (Fig. 3, B-B), and over the same relative part on the other face.

The secondary use of implements as lower millstones is found in the large grooved axes of SW. Victoria. Of these, about 20 per cent. have semi-spherical hollows on one face, and about a further 10 per cent. have them on both faces.

These large grooved axes are almost certainly ancient, and although the use of the hollows on them has never been observed, they are in every way similar to those on the well-known smaller type of millstone used by the Australian aborigines. The hollows are also found, very rarely, on some of the grooved axes from the Darling River, New South Wales, as far north as Louth. Possibly there was some ritualistic significance in this practice. It cannot have been merely a means of economizing material for there is no lack of suitable grinding stone in SW. Victoria.

POTTERY FROM WATOM ISLAND, TERRITORY OF NEW GUINEA.

Watom Island lies a few miles off the north coast of New Britain, in the Territory of New Guinea. During 1909, Father Meyer, of the Catholic Mission on the island, found fragments of pottery which had been washed out of the soil in a ravine during heavy rain. Later, during excavations, he recovered a large quantity of sherds (about 2 cwt.) from half a metre and two metres below the surface. The pottery is of a type quite different from any of the wares known from New Guinea or the adjacent islands, and the Watom Island natives had no knowledge of it. It is different also from the ancient pottery found on the mainland of New Guinea, at Collingwood Bay (1), or that from near Finschhafen (2). The discovery was described by Father Meyer in *Anthropos*, 1909 and 1910.

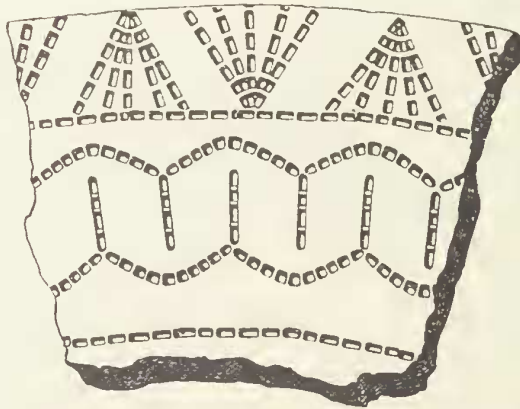


FIG. 4. IMPRESSED DECORATION ON WATOM IS. POTTERY. $\times 1$.

Most of the pottery is plain, but a great deal of it is decorated with patterns impressed on the clay before firing. The lines of the patterns consist of rows of small rectangular dots

set close together. These dots have not been impressed singly, but each of the shorter lines, both straight and curved, have been impressed as a whole with a stamp, and the longer lines built up by repeated applications of the tool, in lengths of about half an inch (Fig. 4 and Pl. VIII, Nos. 12 to 18). Occasionally a small circular stamp was used also. In some cases, perhaps originally in all, the impressions have been filled with white carbonate of lime after firing.

The purpose of this note is to point out that this distinctive technique and at least one of the elements of the Watom patterns, occur on pottery water jars and bowls from Upper Perak, Malay Peninsula, of late nineteenth century date; examples of which are in the India Museum, London. On these vessels there is much less decoration than on the Watom pots. It consists only of a few simple bands or zones, but these include zig-zags built up of short straight lines, and also the "fan" element in Fig. 4 and Pl. VIII, Nos. 17, 18. The lines are rows of small square dots, impressed in exactly the same way as those on the Watom pots. In the British Museum there are other examples of Malay water-bottles and jars decorated in the same manner except that the lines are solid and not dotted. In these the "fan" element occurs, and bands of overlapping curved impressions similar to those of the top zone in Pl. VIII, No. 14. Both the "fan" and the overlapping curves are found on many of the Watom pots.

Most of the Watom pottery is now in various museums in Europe. This museum has only a few fragments, but recently Father Meyer and the Catholic Mission Museum at Vunapope have been good enough to send several hundred pieces showing decoration to Melbourne on loan. As some of this has been found since the pottery was first described, the opportunity is taken to illustrate the main features of that which is available.

The ware is mostly of a dull red colour tending towards brown. Beneath the surface the paste is dark brown in colour, and is of a coarse texture with particles of grit and shell. It has been fired at a low temperature and is not very strong. The pots vary in thickness from $\frac{3}{16}$ to almost 1 inch, but the great majority are approximately $\frac{3}{8}$ inch thick.

The pieces available represent only a small proportion of the total found, and as they are all fragmentary it has only been possible to reconstruct a few complete sections. These are all of the basin form (Pl. VIII, No. 1), which predominates numerically. There are, however, clearly many other

forms which cannot be wholly reconstructed, and a great variety of sizes (Pl. VIII, Nos. 2 to 11). These include vessels with a right-angled shoulder (Pl. VIII, No. 8). Many of the pots have pairs of small pin holes (about $\frac{1}{16}$ inch in diameter and about $\frac{1}{2}$ inch apart) vertically through the overhanging part of the rim (Pl. VIII, Nos. 3 and 6). It is not certain how far apart these pairs of holes occurred, as none of the available rim fragments is more than a few inches wide.

In addition to the ware with the dotted patterns (Pl. VIII, Nos. 1 to 9) a few vessels have for decoration only scattered fingernail impressions (Pl. VIII, No. 10) and some have wavy rims and apparently no other decoration (Pl. VIII, No. 11). There are also a few pieces of pots on which the decoration consists of applied strips, roughly serrated with transverse cuts (Pl. VIII, No. 19).

The vessels with impressed dotted decoration are covered with patterns over the whole of the outer surface of the sides (Pl. VIII, Nos. 1, 12, 13, 14). In most cases, the flat tops of the rims and the insides of the lips are also decorated (Pl. VIII, Nos. 17, 18). No two patterns seem to be exactly the same, although the same elements recur in many of them. There are, however, apart from the zones on rims and borders, four main motifs which occur either singly or combined on nearly all the pots. Examples of these are illustrated (Pl. VIII, Nos. 12 to 15). The curvilinear motif shown in Plate VIII, No. 15, is incomplete, but it is typical of many similar examples which may be parts of one large pattern or of several smaller ones.

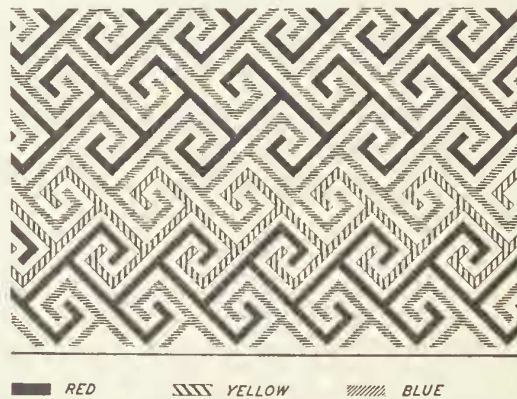


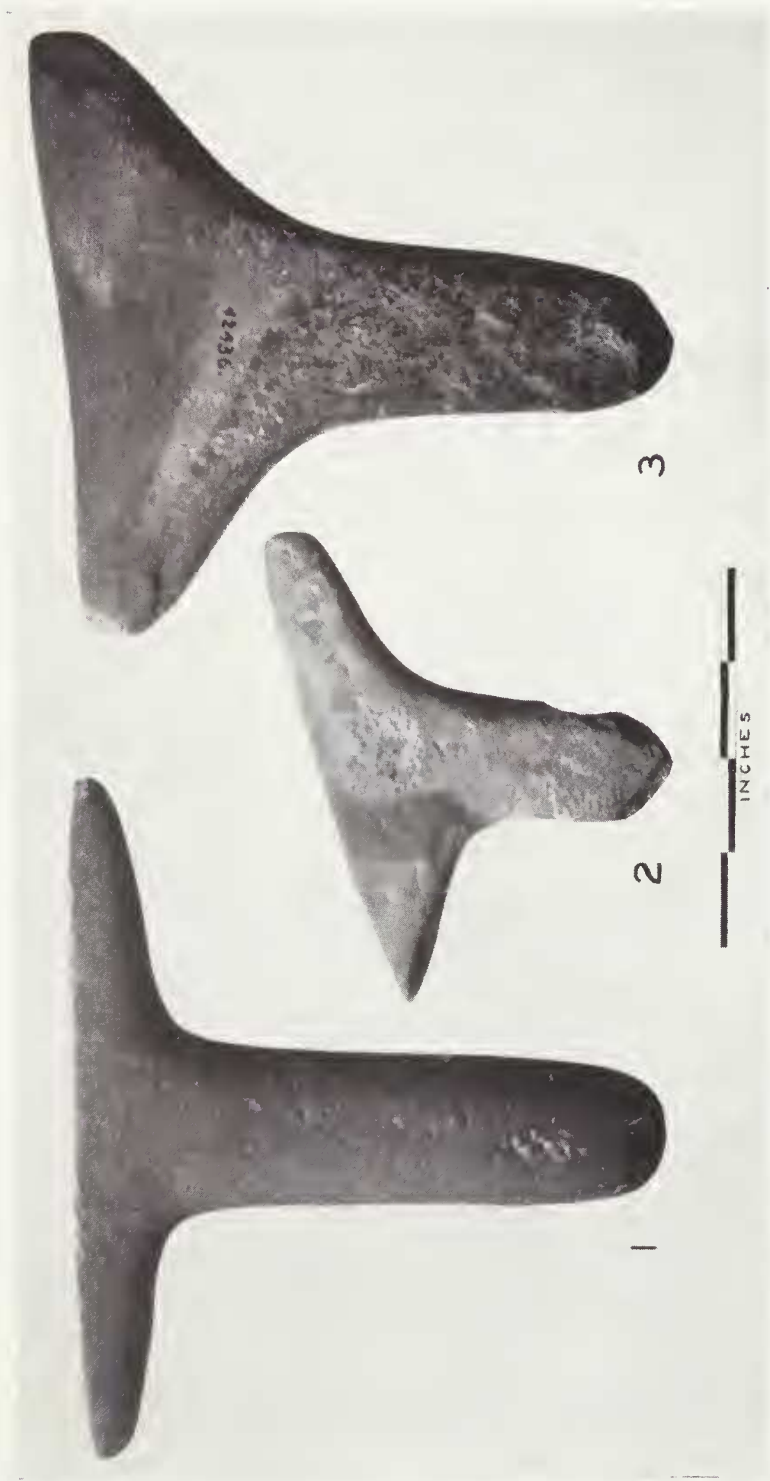
FIG. 5. ANCIENT EMBROIDERED FABRIC, NASCA, PERU (BRITISH MUSEUM).
 $\times \frac{1}{8}$.

The interlocking branched (cymose) key pattern (Pl. VIII, No. 12) seems to be derived from plaited basketwork. Plate VIII, No. 16, shows it drawn flat, with the border lines partially omitted for clearness. Ornament of the same general type occurs on fabrics and basketware from Indonesia, and occasionally on early Chinese bronzes. A pattern which may be actually related to it is found on rattan mats from South Sumatra (4) and from Borneo (5).

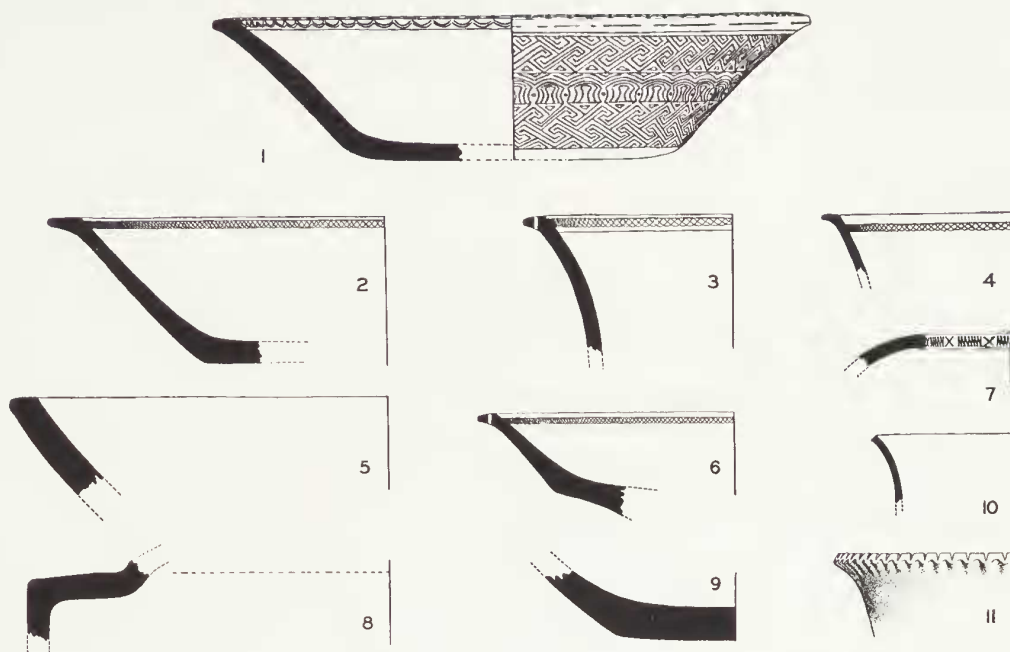
The closest parallel, however, to the Watom motif, occurs on an embroidered gauze fabric from a grave at Nasca, Peru, dating from the period 200 B.C.-200 A.D., now in the British Museum (Fig. 5). It is not suggested that there is necessarily any connection between the two, although the patterns are almost identical, and the writer does not know of this particular design occurring elsewhere.

REFERENCES.

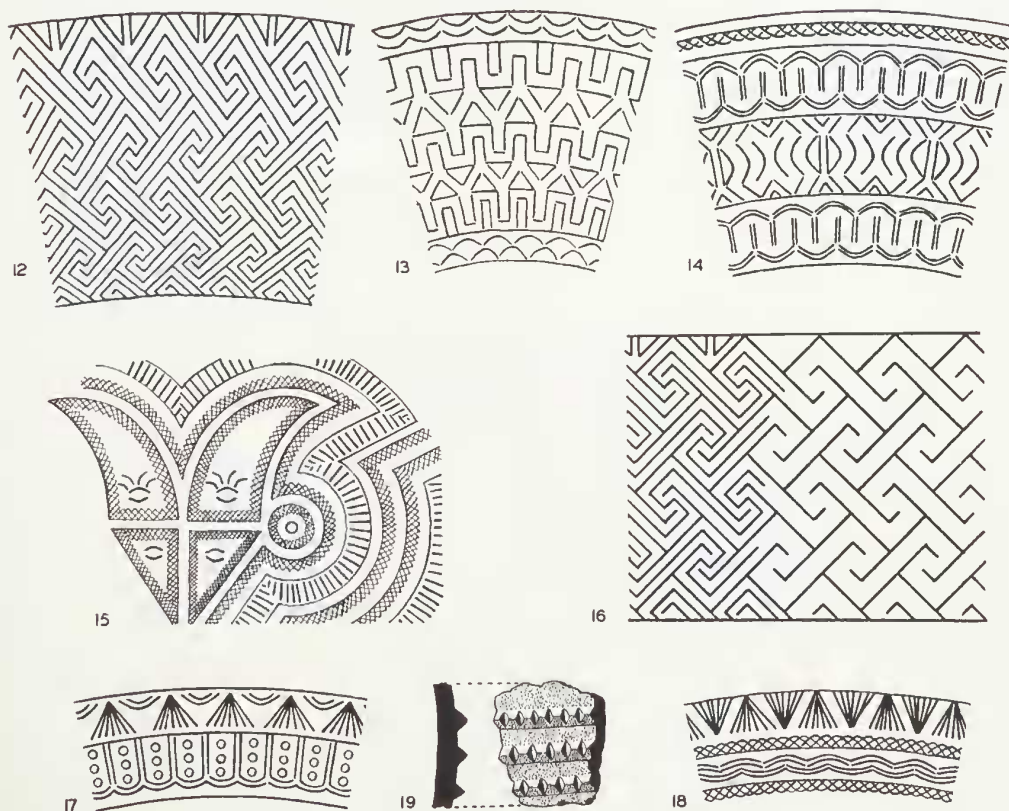
1. Seligman and Joyce. *Anthro. Essays Presented to E. B. Tylor*, p. 333. Oxford, 1907.
2. Neuhauss. *Deutsch Neu Guinea*, vol. i, p. 146. Berlin, 1911.
3. *Anthropos*, iv, pp. 251 and 1,903; v, p. 1,160.
4. Reichs Ethno. Museum, Leiden, xii, 886/12, 1918.
5. Kraemer. *West Indonesien*, pl. xli, fig. 9. Stuttgart, 1927.



Stone Implements, Innisfail and Cairns, Queensland. ($\frac{1}{2}$)



WATOM ISLAND POTTERY ($\frac{1}{4}$)



DECORATIVE PATTERNS ON WATOM ISLAND POTTERY ($\frac{1}{2}$)